

Arizona Alzheimer's Disease Consortium

<http://alzheimers.sbs.arizona.edu/>

Location

925 East McDowell Rd.
Phoenix, AZ 85006

Contact Numbers

Tel: (602) 239-6999
Fax: (602) 239-6988

Contact

Eric Reiman, M.D.
Title: Director
eric.reiman@bannerhealth.com

Overview

The Arizona Alzheimer's Disease (AD) Consortium is a statewide laboratory without walls comprised of the 8 leading biomedical research institutions in Arizona. It includes the state-supported Arizona Alzheimer's Research Center (AARC) and the National Institute on Aging (NIA)-sponsored Arizona Alzheimer's Disease Core Center (ADCC). The participating institutions include Arizona State University, Banner Good Samaritan Medical Center, the Barrow Neurological Institute, the Mayo Clinic Scottsdale, Northern Arizona University; the Sun Health Research Institute; the University of Arizona; and the recently established Translational Genomics Research Institute (TGen). The Consortium has been recognized inside and outside of Arizona as a model of a multi-institutional collaboration in biomedical research, capitalizing on complementary resources and expertise from different disciplines and institutions to address scientific problems in a more fundamental way. The Consortium includes about 90 key personnel, as well as numerous affiliated investigators and support staff from the participating institutions. The Consortium's major theme is the early detection and prevention of AD. Its efforts are devoted to the early detection, tracking, and cognitive neuroscience of AD, related disorders, and aging; the understanding, treatment, and prevention of this disorder; and the development and maintenance of ADCC cores on which many of our studies are being developed. Since the inception of the AARC in late 1998, researchers in our consortium have generated about 600 publications and manuscripts, about 600 research abstracts and presentations, and more than 150 research grants. Additional information about the AARC and ADCC (including a chronological list of publications and abstracts) is available in English and Spanish at our web site listed above.

The AARC is intended to capitalize on the state's complementary resources in brain imaging, computer science, the basic, cognitive, and behavioral neurosciences, genomics, and clinical and neuropathological research to help in the understanding, early detection, treatment, and prevention of AD; to develop one of the best brain imaging research centers in the world; and to provide a model of multi-disciplinary and multi-institutional collaboration in biomedical research. The AARC is an incorporated non-profit organization with a Board of Directors consisting of leading officials from 7 of the 8 participating institutions. Through state and institutional matching funds, it supports more than 40 research projects each year, about half of which include researchers from different institutions and almost all of which involve different scientific disciplines. Researchers in the consortium have made pioneering contributions to (a) the remarkably early detection and tracking of Alzheimer's disease, (b) the development and use of brain imaging tools for the discovery of drugs to treat and, indeed, prevent AD, (c) the discovery of AD risk factors and molecular processes, which provide targets against which to aim new treatments, (d) the characterization of brain processes and cognitive operations which are involved in normal behaviors and how they are preferentially affected by AD and normal aging, and (e) the development of new research methods for the study of AD, the discovery of drugs to treat and prevent it, and the study of other neuroscientific problems.

The Arizona ADCC is an NIA-sponsored Alzheimer's Disease Center, the first in the Southwest, and its most extensive example of statewide collaboration in biomedical research. The ADCC provides shared scientific resources to be used by researchers inside and outside of Arizona for the study of Alzheimer's disease. The Administrative Core provides leadership and support and operates a competitive pilot study program for new investigators. The Clinical Core permits qualified researchers to access data from and conduct studies in patients with AD, patients with other memory and thinking problems, patients with mild cognitive impairment, and cognitively normal volunteers who are clinically well characterized, followed annually, and enrolled in our brain donation program. It also provides access to volunteers and data from a longitudinal study of cognitively normal carriers and non-carriers of a common AD susceptibility gene. The Education and Information Transfer Core works closely with the Alzheimer's Association Desert Southwest Chapter provides educational and training services to professional caregivers, family caregivers, and the community, and is committed to serving the needs of Arizona's underserved, understudied Hispanic and Native American communities.

Eric Reiman, M.D. serves as Director of the Consortium, as well as its state and federally-funded components. Carol Barnes, Ph.D, serves as the Chairperson of the Consortium's 20-member Internal Scientific Advisory Committee. The Consortium's distinguished External Advisory Committee includes Marilyn Albert, Ph.D, Director of Division of Cognitive Neurosciences, Department of Neurology Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, Richard Frackowiak, M.D, F.R.C.P. Vice-Provost University College London, Former Dean, Institute of Neurology, UCL, Leon Thal, M.D., Director, UCSD Alzheimer's Disease Research Center, and Allen D. Roses, M.D., Senior Vice President, Genetics Research, Glaxo Smith Kline. Zaven Khachaturian Ph.D, Senior Medical / Scientific Advisor, Alzheimer's Association, Former Director, Office of Alzheimer's Research at NIH, serves as its principal consultant.

In addition to his roles as the AD Consortium Director, Dr. Reiman is Professor and Associate Head of Psychiatry at the University of Arizona, Clinical Director of the Neurogenomics Program at the Translational Genomics Research Institute, Scientific Director of the PET Center and Alzheimer's Disease Research Program at Banner Good Samaritan Medical Center. His own research is dedicated to the use of brain imaging techniques in the early detection and tracking of AD and the discovery of disease-modifying drugs, and the cost-effective discovery of drugs to prevent it.